

11-03-00

Attorney Docket No. 2271/62705

Total Pages 3

Express Mail Label No. EL628790279US

11/02/00
jc961 U.S. PTO

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS

Box Patent Application

Washington, D. C. 20231

Sir:

Transmitted herewith for filing under 37 CFR 1.53(b) are the specification and claims of the nonprovisional patent application of:

Yuichi Yamagami, Michael J. Duciewicz, Patrick Nappi, Joyce McNichol, Gabriela Barrales and
Nancy Gordon for
Inventor(s)

MANAGING SHIPMENT CHARGES FOR INTERNATIONAL TRANSPORTATION OF ITEMS

Title of Invention

APPLICATION ELEMENTS ENCLOSED:

1. X Specification (total pages 17 including:
 - a. 5 pages of claims (16 claims)
 - b. 1 page(s) Abstract
2. X 6 sheets of X informal formal drawings (Figs. 1-6)
3. X Oath or declaration of Applicant(s) (4 total pages)
 - a. Newly executed (original)
 - b. X Unexecuted
 - c. Copy from a prior application (37 CFR 1.63(d))
(for continuation/divisional with Item 14 completed)
4. Deletion of Inventor(s)
Signed statement attached deleting inventor(s) named in the prior application, see 37 CFR 1.63(d)(2) and 1.33(b)
5. Incorporation By Reference
The entire disclosure of the prior application, from which a copy of the oath or declaration is supplied in item 3b is considered as being part of the disclosure of the accompanying application and is hereby incorporated by reference therein.
6. Microfiche Computer Program (Appendix)

APPLICATION PARTS ENCLOSED:

7. An assignment of the invention to (cover sheet & document(s))
8. 37 CFR 3.73(b) Statement (when there is an assignee)
9. X Power of Attorney
 - a. Newly executed (original)
 - b. X Unexecuted
 - c. Copy from a prior application

jc925 U.S. PTO
09/704434
11/02/00

X Copies of IDS Citations

12. X Return Receipt Postcard (MPEP 503)

____ Statement filed in prior application, status still proper and desired

☐ Continuation of prior application No.: _____ filed _____

☐ Divisional of prior application No.: _____ filed _____

☐ Continuation-in-part (CIP) of prior application No.: _____ filed _____

_____ A certified copy of priority application No. _____ has been filed in prior application
S.N. _____ filed _____

The filing fee is calculated as follows:

CLAIMS AS FILED, LESS ANY CLAIMS CANCELLED BY AMENDMENT

					Rate			Fee	
	Number Filed		Number Extra*		Small Entity	Other Entity		Small Entity	Other Entity
Total Claims	16 - 20	=	0	x	\$ 9	\$ 18	=	\$ 0	\$ 0
Indep. Claims	3 - 3	=	0	x	\$ 40	\$ 80	=	\$ 0	\$ 0
Multiple Dependent Claims Presented: Yes ____ No <u>X</u>					\$135	\$270	=	\$ 0	\$ 0
If the difference in column 1 is less than zero, enter "0" in column 2					Basic Fee			\$ 355	\$ 710
					Total Fee			\$	\$ 710


18. X A check in the amount of \$ 710.00 to cover the filing fee.
19. ___ A check in the amount of \$ _____ for recordation of the Assignment.
20. X The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required in connection with the following or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 03-3125.
- X Filing fees under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16.
- X Patent application processing fees under 37 C.F.R. §1.17.
- ___ The issue fee set in 37 C.F.R. §1.18 at or before mailing of the Notice of Allowance, pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §1.311(b).
21. X Three copies of this sheet are enclosed.
22. ___ Other (identify) _____

CORRESPONDENCE ADDRESS:

Ivan S. Kavrukov
Registration No. 25,161
Cooper & Dunham LLP
1185 Avenue of the Americas
New York, New York 10036
United States of Americas
Tel.: (212) 278-0400
Fax: (212) 391-0525

Respectfully submitted,

November 2, 2000
Date


Richard F. Jaworski, Reg. No. 33,515
Attorney for Applicants
c/o Cooper & Dunham LLP
1185 Avenue of the Americas
New York, New York 10036
Tel.: (212) 278-0400

Application
for
United States Letters Patent

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that,

Yuichi Yamagami, Michael J. Duciewicz,
Patrick Nappi, Joyce McNichol, Gabriela Barrales and Nancy Gordon

have invented certain new and useful improvements in

MANAGING SHIPMENT CHARGES FOR
INTERNATIONAL TRANSPORTATION OF ITEMS

of which the following is a full, clear and exact description:

MANAGING SHIPMENT CHARGES FOR INTERNATIONAL TRANSPORTATION OF ITEMS

Field

This patent specification is in the field of methods and systems for managing shipment charges, particularly for international shipments where a supplier uses an independent shipping entity such as UPS. More specifically, the specification pertains to tracking the charges the shipping entity bills to the supplier and the supplier bills to customers for specific items.

Background

In many industries, manufacturers warehouse spare parts and other goods that customers can order for delivery directly or through intermediaries such as repair shops or distributors. In order to ensure short delivery times, a supplier can ship from the closest one of a number, preferably a high number, of geographically dispersed, each well stocked. However, this can get expensive, and can unduly increase the cost of the goods to the customer. On the other hand, keeping only a single facility or a small number of facilities, works against short delivery times and low shipping charges. This is exacerbated when the supplier services a worldwide market, where both delivery times and shipping charges can vary greatly depending on the customer's location. It is important, therefore, to find ways to reconcile these conflicting requirements, particularly where the supplier services a worldwide market, in a manner that benefits both the supplier and the customer.

The assignee hereof has found an efficacious solution to this dilemma and has been using it for more than a year. It involves shipping to customers in this country from an overseas location, but doing this in a special way. The good ordered by a customer that business day are packaged in a separate package addressed to that customer, as is conventional, but then these individually addressed packages are bundled into a single international shipment. This is shipped by air that day, using an

independent shipping entity such as UPS. After clearing customs, the bundled package is divided into individual packages and these are shipped in the same manner as if they started out from a supplier facility in this country and were handed to a shipping entity such as UPS in this country. In this manner, the goods get to this country and clear customs quickly and conveniently and at a lower cost than if shipped as individual orders. In addition, the supplier can maintain a warehouse facility in this country for some goods, but it need not be as fully stocked as the overseas warehouse.

From the customer's point of view, this operates as though the order was shipped from a warehouse in the United States. The customer is invoiced for shipping charges as though the goods were shipped from a location in the United States, for example at the rate a shipper such as UPS would charge for a shipment of the appropriate size and weight from a location in the U.S. to the zone where the customer is located. From the supplier's (e.g., manufacturer's) point of view, this makes it possible to warehouse all, or most, of the spare parts and supplies for customers in the U.S. at a location close to the manufacturing facilities (e.g., in Japan), and make a long term arrangement with the shipper that would result in overall shipping charges to the supplier that are less than the cumulative charge the shipper would require for shipping individual packages from the overseas location to customers in the United States. The supplier can thus achieve many of the benefits of supplying from a location in the U.S. without incurring the expense of maintaining duplicate inventories in other countries. The customer can benefit by paying only local shipping charges and getting a short delivery time consistently, overcoming the problems that may arise when different supply locations may differ in what they stock at a particular time and when individual packages need to clear customs.

This approach applies not only to spare parts and supplies such as consumables but to other goods and to shipments from any first country to any second country, or from one geographical area to another.

Summary

When orders are shipped as described above, conventional methods of tracking shipping charges may not apply. For example, the cost to the supplier for shipping a part to a customer may not be, and typically is not, the same as the charge billed to the customer. The charge to the customer in this country may be the same as if the order was shipped as an individual package from a location in this country by a known shipper such as UPS. However, the charge to the supplier has different components that may be different to separate and may add up to a figure different from the charge billed to the customer. It is believed desirable to find a way to track and manage the charges and costs to the supplier relative to those billed to customers, and this patent specification is directed to a way to do so.

Accordingly, an object of the method and system disclosed herein is to manage the charges for shipping such that the supplier (e.g., manufacturer) would keep track of and use information regarding differences between first shipping charges such as the actual charges to the supplier for shipping items to customers from an actual shipping location and the charges applicable for shipping from a virtual location such as a virtual location in a different country. Other objects will become apparent from this summary and the detailed description of preferred embodiment below.

Brief Description of the Drawings

Fig. 1 illustrates a system for managing shipments and shipping charges in accordance with a preferred embodiment.

Fig. 2 is a more detailed functional block diagram illustrating a preferred embodiment.

Fig. 3 illustrates a table illustrating charges for individual shipments from a virtual shipping location to customers in a particular zone, used in practicing a preferred embodiment.

Fig. 4 is a flow chart illustrating steps in a process implementing a preferred embodiment.

Fig. 5 is a flow chart illustrating other steps in a process implementing a preferred embodiment.

Fig. 6 illustrates results of an analysis of shipping charges.

Detailed Description of Preferred Embodiments

Fig. 1 illustrates an interconnection through one or more networks between customers and a supplier facility in one area, the United States in this example, and a supplier facility that includes a warehouse in another location, Japan in this example. The supplier facility in Japan includes a warehouse 100 for goods such as spare parts for equipment and supplies. The equipment can include copiers, printers, facsimile machines and other office equipment. Warehouse 100 can include an order fulfilling facility, or may use a different order fulfilling entity, or an outside service. Also included in the Japan facilities of the supplier is a computer operation 102 that can include one or more personal computers (PC) or other computers that can be interconnected through a local network (LAN) or some other network with each other and with support equipment such as one or more printers (Pr) and one or more servers (not illustrated) and database storage facilities (DB). The computer facility 102 and the warehouse/order fulfilling facility 100 can be interconnected to exchange information regarding orders and shipments.

Preferably through a firewall, the supplier facilities in Japan connect with a network 104 such as a proprietary network or a public network such as the Internet which extends to the U.S. At the U.S. side, there are customers at locations such as 106, 108 and 110, a U.S. operation system 112 and shipper facilities such as a U.S. warehouse 114 and its computer system 116, all connected for the exchange of information through a network 118 and network 104. Networks 104 and 108 can be the same public network, e.g., the Internet, or they may be partly or fully proprietary networks and can use the public telephone switching network or other third party communication links as needed or desired.

The customer locations can be equipped differently and can communicate orders for parts or other items in different ways. For example, customer location 106 can be equipped only with a telephone, and the customer can call in orders by connecting through a public switching system 120 with an operator at a telephone (TEL) at the supplier's U.S. operation system 112. The customer at location 108 can communicate using a personal computer (PC) at location 108, through network 118, with a computer at system 112 that comprises one or more personal computers (PC) and supporting equipment such as the illustrated server and database storage (DB) interconnected through a local area network (LAN) or in some other way, and preferably protected with a fire wall that also connects to network 104. The customer at location 110 can have additional facilities such as one or more personal computers (PC) and supporting equipment such as a printer (Pr) and a database storage (DB) interconnected by a local area or some other network and communicating with system 112 in a manner similar to that of customer location 108. U.S. warehouse 114 communicates with its computer system 116, which in turn communicates with the other illustrated facilities through network 104, preferably through a suitable firewall. The customers at locations such as 106, 108 and 110 can be individuals, businesses, repair facilities, distributors or other entities. The items to be shipped to them can be spare parts or other items.

An example of an operation of the system of Fig. 1, and of the shipping or freight cost conversion discussed in greater detail below in connection with Figs. 3-6, are illustrated in the functional block diagram of Fig. 2. Referring for now to Fig. 2, customer orders from locations such as 106, 108 and 110 are delivered through a network 200 designated here Ricoh Online to U.S. operation system 201 that can be similar to or the same as system 112 earlier discussed. Each order preferably includes information such as the identity of the customer and the party to be billed (if different from the customer), shipping and billing addresses for the item being ordered, an identification of the product (part or other item) being ordered, a price, a number of items, and possibly additional or different information needed or desired in order to fulfil the order. U.S. operation system 201 process the orders received from customers,

storing pertinent information in a Customer Order Information Database (DB).

The processing of orders in a preferred embodiment includes the following main steps that can be carried out at the supplier's U.S. facilities. At step 202, the process tests whether the ordered items is in inventory in the U.S. (e.g., in a warehouse such as 114 or some other U.S. warehouse maintained by or for the supplier). This test can be made by consulting a database such as DB at the U.S. Operation System 201 that maintains and updates information on what items have been shipped to thereto and what items have been shipped out and, thus, on what items are available for shipment from the U.S. facility. If the answer at step 202 is yes, order fulfillment takes place at the U.S. warehouse at step 204 and the ordered item is shipped and delivered to the customer at step 206, e.g., by using an individual delivery with a shipper such as UPS. The customer can be invoiced or otherwise charged for shipping in an amount that can take into account factors such as the weight and size of the item, the shipping distance, and delivery time. Alternatively, the supplier can omit one or more of these factors, or charge a flat amount per shipment, or make no charge for shipment.

If the test at step 200 determines that the ordered item is not in inventory in the U.S., order information is delivered to an overseas supplier 208 that can be similar to or the same as system 102 of Fig. 1, and the following steps are carried out at overseas facilities. Order fulfillment takes place at step 210 that can perform functions similar to or the same as warehouse 100 of Fig. 1. The ordered items are packaged into individual packages for respective individual customers at step 212, with an individual destination (address) label to the individual customer and preferably with an indication of parameters such as the weight of the individual package for the customer. At step 214 a number of individual packages for respective customers are consolidated into, and are packaged into, a single shipment. For example, orders received in a single period such as a business day, are consolidated into a single package. The consolidated package is shipped from Japan at step 216 as a single export shipment, at a single shipping charge to the supplier from a shipper such as UPS.

The following steps take place in this country. At step 218, the consolidated shipment is received in the U.S. and is processed as an import entry through customs and otherwise. At step 220, the consolidated package is divided into the original individual packages, which are shipped to the respective customers for individual package delivery, preferably by the same shipper. At step 222, a calculation is made of the domestic freight (shipping) charges applicable to the respective individual packages. This calculation uses a domestic freight conversion table from a database 224. As a non-limiting example, the table contains information identifying the shipping charge that a shipper such as UPS would charge for delivery of an individual package to the customer from a virtual domestic (U.S.) location, preferably based on factors such as the package weight and/or size and a geographical zone in which the customer is located. The calculations at step 222 provide charging information from which an automatic domestic freight billing system prepares shipping bills for the respective packages and customers. These bills are sent or otherwise delivered to the respective customers at step 228, e.g., together with the packages shipped at step 220 or in some other way, electronically or as hard copies.

Additional processing is carried out in order to manage the shipping charges internally, taking into account the fact that there may be, and typically are, differences between the amount the customer is billed for shipping a package and the amount applicable to that package but actually charged to the supplier. To this end, at step 230 the process computes such differences, in a manner discussed in more detail below, and at step 232 the results of such computation are utilized, e.g., for internal management, cost accounting and allocation purposes, for planning purposes, or for some other purpose.

Referring to Fig. 4, the process in a preferred embodiment includes providing a database of international freight amounts and one or more domestic freight conversion tables. The process starts at step 400 and at step 402 stores in the appropriate database applicable international freight amounts. For example, assuming in a simplified example that there is only one consolidated shipment from a first country

(Japan) facility to customers in a second country (U.S.), the entry in the database can be the actual dollar amount that the shipper (e.g., UPS) has charged the supplier for this consolidated shipment. The amount can take into account any arrangements between the supplier and shipper that would affect it, such as long term contract provisions, volume discounts, penalty charges, etc. The information stored at step 402 can be kept accessible in various ways, such as by day, week, month, etc., by shipping order number, by shipper, etc. It can include additional information such as information regarding the individual packages in the consolidated shipment, such as the identity of the items included, the identity of the customers, addresses of customers, etc. At step 404, the database is supplemented with one or more domestic freight conversion tables, for example tables such as illustrated in Fig. 3. Additional tables can be stored and used for different purposes, such as for shipping to customers that have different arrangements with the supplier, for shipping via a different carrier, for slower but less expensive shipping, etc.

Referring to Fig. 5, a flowchart of main steps in a process implementing a preferred embodiment starts at step 500 and at step 502 checks if an order has been received from a customer and cycles through this check until the process finds that a customer order has been received. Then, at step 504 the process stores the customer order information in the appropriate database, and at step 506 checks the appropriate database to see if the ordered item or items are in inventory at a U.S. facility. If the answer at step 506 is yes, an individual order fulfillment from the U.S. warehouse is carried out at step 508, in the manner earlier discussed in connection with Fig. 2, and the process returns to step 500. These steps typically are carried out in the one country, the U.S. in this example.

If the answer at step 506 is no, the order needs to be filled from the overseas facility. To this end, the following steps typically take place in another country, Japan in this example. At step 512 the process cycled through checking if the day has ended and, when 4 PM has come, cycles at step 514 through checking if the day is a business day. After both steps 512 and 514 give yes answers, at step 516 the process transfers

to the overseas facility the customer orders that have been received at step 502 and stored at step 504 but have not been sent for fulfilment to the U.S. facility (because step 506 has determined that the ordered items are not in inventory in the U.S.). Of course, the orders transferred at step 516 are those received over the applicable time period, typically since the last business day. In response to the orders transmitted at step 516, the ordered parts are assembled at the overseas facility, in individual packages that are addressed to the respective customers and then are consolidated into a single international shipment. This shipment is turned over to a shipping entity such as UPS, transported to the U.S. and cleared through customs. The individual packages are then shipped as such to the respective customers. The conventional tracking information that the shipping entity keeps is shared with the supplier to the extend needed to monitor the order transportation.

Step 518 of the process uses such tracking information and possibly other information regarding the shipment that the supplier keeps, to monitor the transportation of the ordered items from the overseas facility to the ultimate individual customers. At step 520 the process cycles through checking if the orders have been delivered to customers, using at least in part tracking information from the shipping entity. After step 520 determines that the orders have been delivered to the customers, the process at step 522 reads from the database information regarding the international freight amount, stored in step 402 of Fig. 4. At step 524 the process prepares the information needed to pay the shipping entity for the international freight shipment based on the data step 522 has determined.

In order to prepare and send appropriate bills to customers that include a shipping charge, the process carries out the following steps, typically at a U.S. facility. A step 526 the process cycles through checking if information has been obtained regarding the weight of the items in the individual packages received as a part of the consolidated shipment from overseas. This information can be obtained from a database that identifies a weight for each of the items that a customer can order, and information that identifies the item(s) in each respective individual package in the

consolidated shipment. After step 526 determines that the weight information has been received, at step 528 the process consults one or more domestic freight conversion tables, using information stored at step 404 of Fig. 4. Based on this information, at step 530 the process calculates the appropriate domestic freight amount to be charged to each customer for the shipment from a virtual location in the U.S. to the customer's location, and at step 532 outputs a respective bill to each customer. The bill can be only for the shipping charge, or it can be a bill that includes charges for the ordered items as well. The bill is sent to the customer in a conventional manner.

In order to keep track of differences between the shipping charges to the supplier and to the customer, and make use of the calculated differences, at step 534 the process calculates such differences by using information between the international freight amount read obtained at step 522 and the domestic freight amounts calculated at step 530 for the packages in the respective consolidated shipment. Because of the manner in which these two types of freight charges are levied, typically there will be differences, positive or negative. For example, the supplier can bill \$15 to each of 100 customers for shipping charges, but the shipping entity may bill the supplier a total of \$14,500 (or a total of \$16,000) for shipping the consolidated package of those 100 orders from the overseas facility, processing it through customs and then delivering the individual orders to the customers. In this example, the difference step 534 calculates will be a gain of \$500 (or a loss of \$1,000) for the supplier. At step 536, the process stores the calculated difference in the appropriate database, and carries out required accumulation and processing of information, and at step 538 returns to step 500.

The data stored at step 536 for each business day, or some other period, can be processed and used in a variety of ways. For example, it can be used in step 536 to produce a Freight Analysis of the type illustrated in Fig. 6, where information is by month. Specifically, Fig. 6 shows by month (1) the freight charges from the carrier to the supplier (e.g., from UPS to a manufacturer such as the assignee of this application), (2) the freight charges actually billed by the supplier to customers, and (3) the variance, i.e., the difference between these two cumulative amounts for the month. Many other

analysis formats are possible with the data stored at step 536. The results can be used for a number of purposes related to internal tracking and assessment of the supplier's business.

5 It should be clear that the disclosure above is specific to preferred embodiments given as examples, and that many variations and additions are within its scope. For example, the order of execution of steps can vary, where the operations take place can be changed, etc.

CLAIMS:

1. A method of managing shipping charges for transportation of items by a shipping entity from one or more actual locations of a supplier to customer locations comprising the computer-implemented steps of:
providing first shipping charges related to actual charges by the shipping entity to the supplier for transportation of items by the shipping entity from the one or more actual supplier locations to the customer locations;
providing second shipping charges related to shipping charges for the items calculated by reference to charges applicable to shipment of the items to the customers from one or more virtual supplier locations that are different from the one or more actual supplier locations;
computing differences between the first shipping charges and the second shipping charges; and
utilizing the computed differences in managing shipping charges.
2. A method as in claim 1 in which the one or more actual supplier locations are in a first country and the customer locations are in a second country.
3. A method as in claim 2 in which said items are shipped from the first country to the second country in consolidated international shipments containing packages for groups of said customers, and the consolidated international shipments are divided in the second country into individual shipments to the respective customers.
4. A method as in claim 3 in which the step of providing the second shipping charges comprises utilizing a first table including relationships between weights of items and charges for shipping the respective items.

1 5. A method as in claim 4 in which the step of providing said second charges
2 further comprises utilizing a second table including relationships between
3 shipping charges and zones for said customer locations.

1 6. A method of shipping items from a first country to a customers in a second
2 country and managing shipping charge information comprising the steps of:
3 fulfilling orders in the first country for items for a number of said customers,
4 packaging the items in the first country into individual packages
5 addressed to respective individual customers, and consolidating the
6 individual packages into a collective international shipment;
7 shipping the collective international shipment as a single package to the second
8 country, using a first shipping entity;
9 dividing the collective international shipment in the second country into said
10 individual packages and shipping the individual packages to the
11 respective customers from a location in the second country, using a
12 second shipping entity;
13 providing a first shipping charge related to an actual charge by at least one of the
14 shipping entities;
15 computing a second shipping charge related to applicable charges for shipment
16 of the individual packages from a virtual location in the second country to
17 said customers;
18 computing a difference between the first shipping charge and the second
19 shipping charge; and
20 utilizing said difference.

1 7. A method as in claim 6 in which said first and second shipping entities are the
2 same entity.

1 8. A method as in claim 6 in which the providing step comprises providing a first
2 shipping charge that includes an actual charge for shipping the individual
3 packages in the second country.

1 9. A method as in claim 8 in which the providing step further includes providing a
2 first shipping charge that includes an actual charge for shipping the collective
3 international shipment from the first country to the second country.

1 10. A method as in claim 6 in which said computing a second shipping charge
2 comprises using a table relating shipping charges applicable to shipping from a
3 virtual location to zones of customer locations.

1 11. A method as in claim 6 in which said computing a second shipping charge
2 comprises using information regarding weight of the individual packages.

1 12. A method as in claim 6 in which said computing a second shipping charge
2 comprises using information regarding both weight of the individual packages
3 and zones of customer locations.

1 13. A method as in claim 6 including carrying out the set of steps of fulfilling through
2 computing a second shipping charge for orders related to a first time period, and
3 repeating said set of steps for orders related to successive time periods, and
4 said steps of computing a difference and utilizing the difference comprise
5 computing differences related to a number of said time period and utilizing at
6 least some of said differences.

1 14. A system for tracking variances between freight charges that a shipping entity
2 charges a supplier for shipping, from a first country to a second country,
3 consolidated international shipments each containing items ordered by a number

4 of customers located in the second country and for dividing the consolidated
5 shipment into individual shipments to respective customers and delivering same
6 to the customers in the second country, and freight charges the supplier bills to
7 the customers for the delivered individual shipments, comprising:
8 a computer system programmed to receive orders by customers in the second
9 country for items from the supplier, each of said orders identifying at least
10 the customer, the item or items ordered, and an address for the customer
11 in the second country;
12 a database arrangement storing information regarding the freight charges that
13 the shipping entity charges the supplier for shipping the consolidated
14 international shipments and for dividing the consolidated shipments and
15 delivering the individual shipments to the customers, and further storing
16 information regarding local shipping charges applicable to shipping from a
17 virtual location in the second country to respective locations in the second
18 country;
19 said computer system receiving information related to the orders and shipments
20 and utilizing the information received thereby and information from said
21 database, and being programmed to calculate on the basis thereof
22 shipping charges for billing to the customers in amounts that depend on
23 the items in the individual packages and the locations of the customers in
24 the second country; and
25 said computer system further being programmed to calculate differences
26 between charges from the shipping entity to the supplier for a subset of
27 said items and charges billed to the customers for said subset, and
28 present results making use of said differences.

- 1 15. A system as in claim 13 in which said results comprise results presenting said
2 differences organized at least by time periods longer than a day.

1 16. A system as in claim 13 in which said information regarding local shipping
2 charges comprises information identifying local shipping charges a commercial
3 carrier makes for shipping from a selected location in the second country to
4 customer locations in the second country based on weight of shipments and on
5 zones of the customers' locations.

Abstract

A method and system for tracking and making use of variances between amounts billed to a supplier for shipping items from one country to customers in another and amounts billed to the customers in a setting where the supplier uses a carrier such as UPS to ship a consolidated international shipment of numerous individual orders from one country to the other and the individual packages are thereafter distributed in the second country.

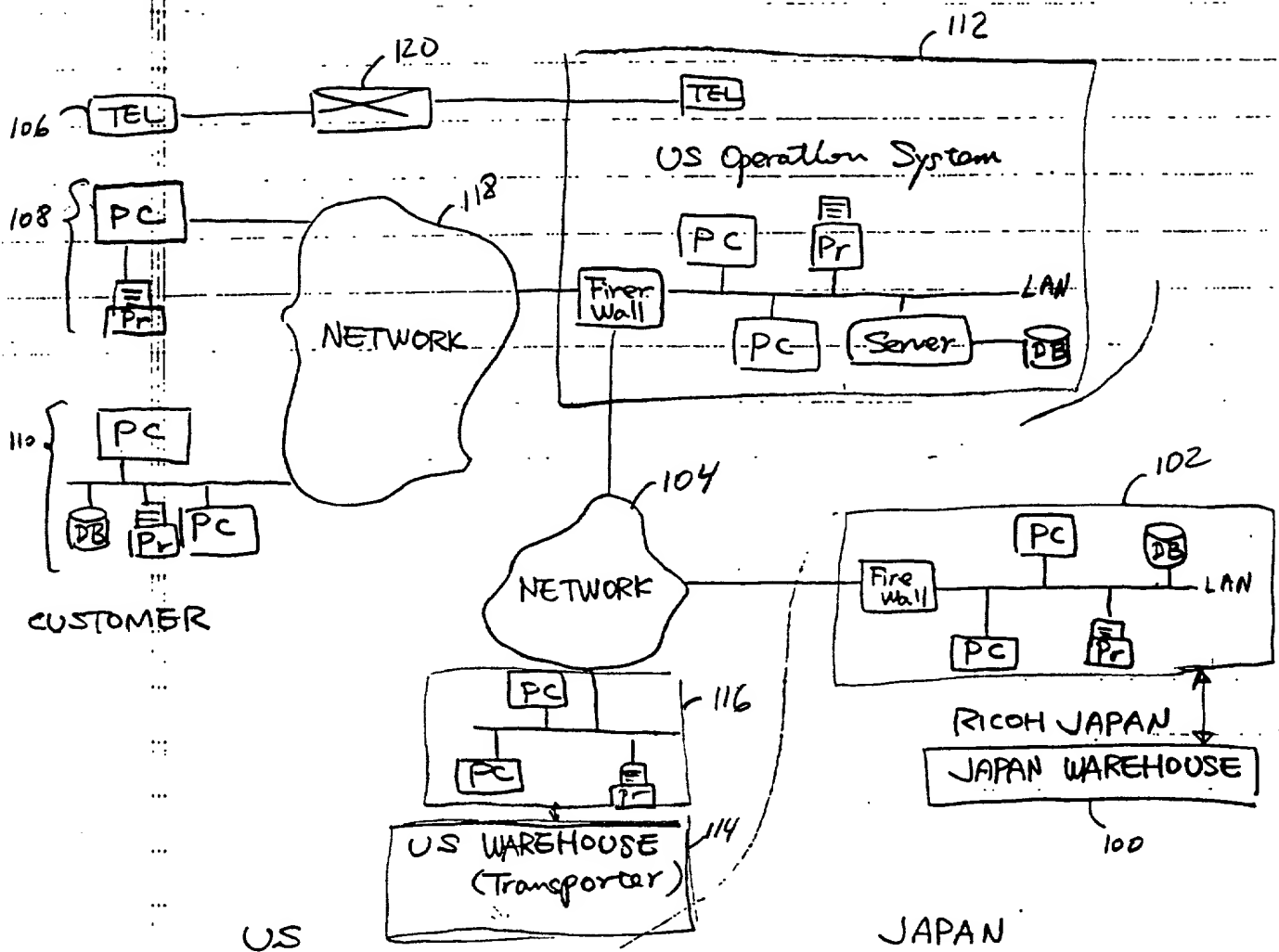
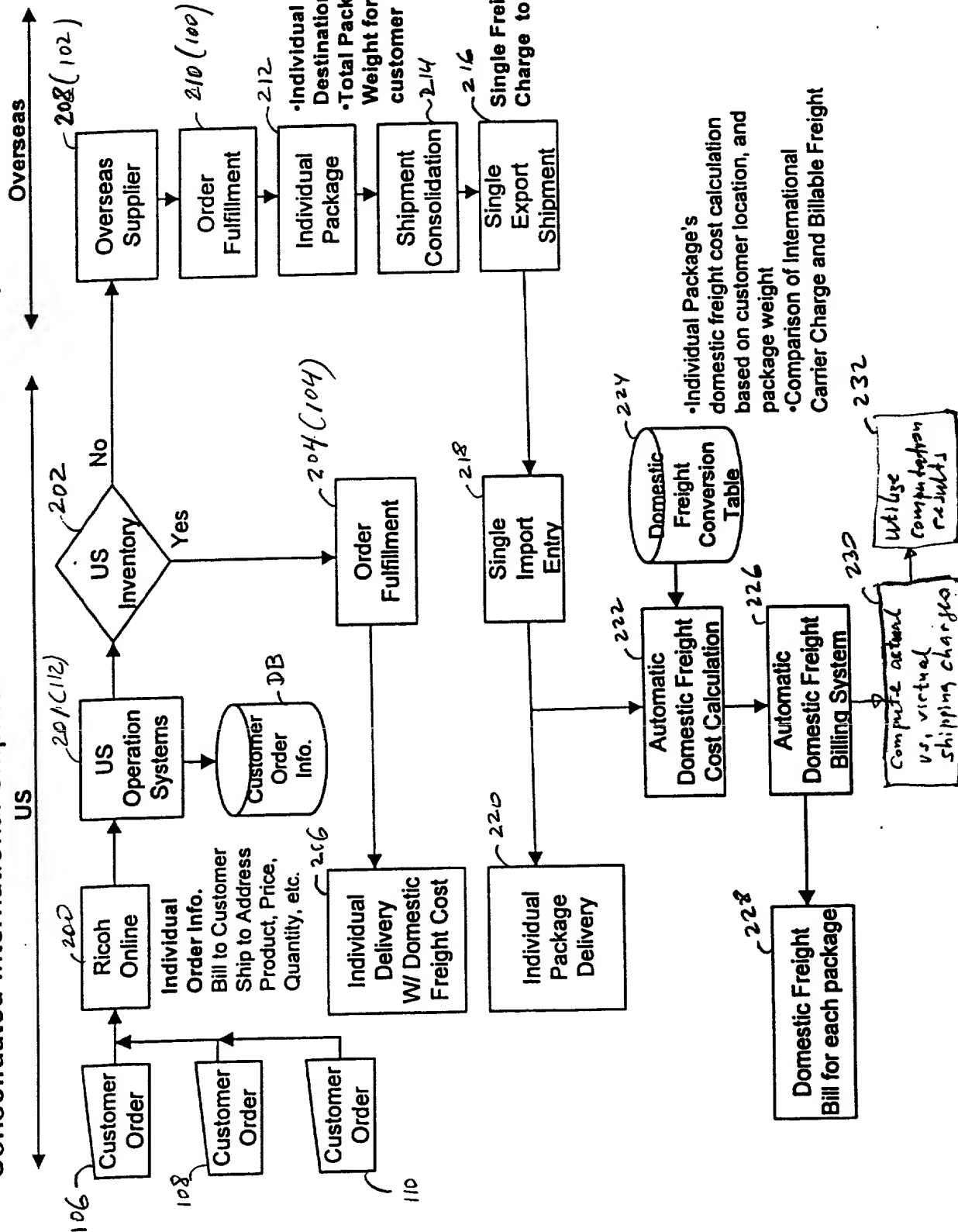


Fig. 1

Automatic Freight Cost Conversion System for Global Drop Shipment Consolidated International Shipment / Individual Domestic Shipment



USLTM28

RICOH CORPORATION
REDS FREIGHT CHARGES

02/23/00

FUNCTION: I (A=ADD C=CHANGE D=DELETE I=INQUIRE)
CARRIER CODE: UPN ZONE: 4

FREIGHT LAST OPER				FREIGHT LAST OPER			
LBS	AMOUNT	UPDATED	ID	LBS	AMOUNT	UPDATED	ID
1	16.75	01/16/97	MRB	2	18.50	01/16/97	MRB
3	20.25	01/16/97	MRB	4	22.00	01/16/97	MRB
5	23.75	01/16/97	MRB	6	25.75	01/16/97	MRB
7	27.75	01/16/97	MRB	8	29.75	01/16/97	MRB
9	31.75	01/16/97	MRB	10	33.50	01/16/97	MRB
11	35.25	01/16/97	MRB	12	36.75	01/16/97	MRB
13	38.25	01/16/97	MRB	14	39.75	01/16/97	MRB
15	41.25	01/16/97	MRB	16	42.75	01/16/97	MRB
17	44.25	01/16/97	MRB	18	45.75	01/16/97	MRB
19	47.25	01/16/97	MRB	20	48.75	01/16/97	MRB

COPY FROM A CARRIER CODE: ZONE:

PF3=RETURN PF7=PRIOR PF8=NEXT PF10=TOP PF12=EXIT

(Domestic Freight Conversion Table)

Fig. 3

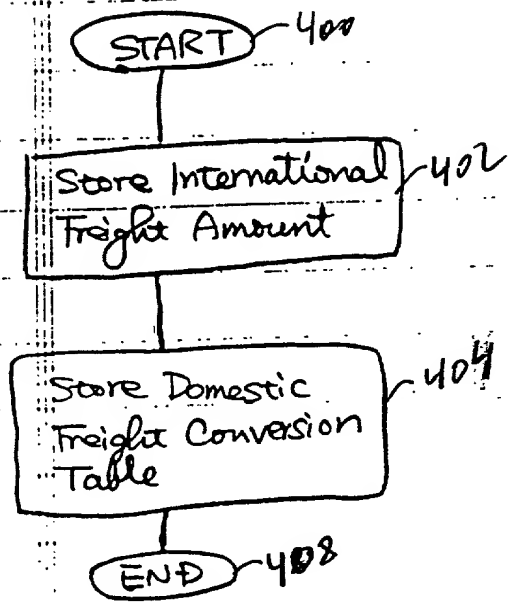


Fig. 4

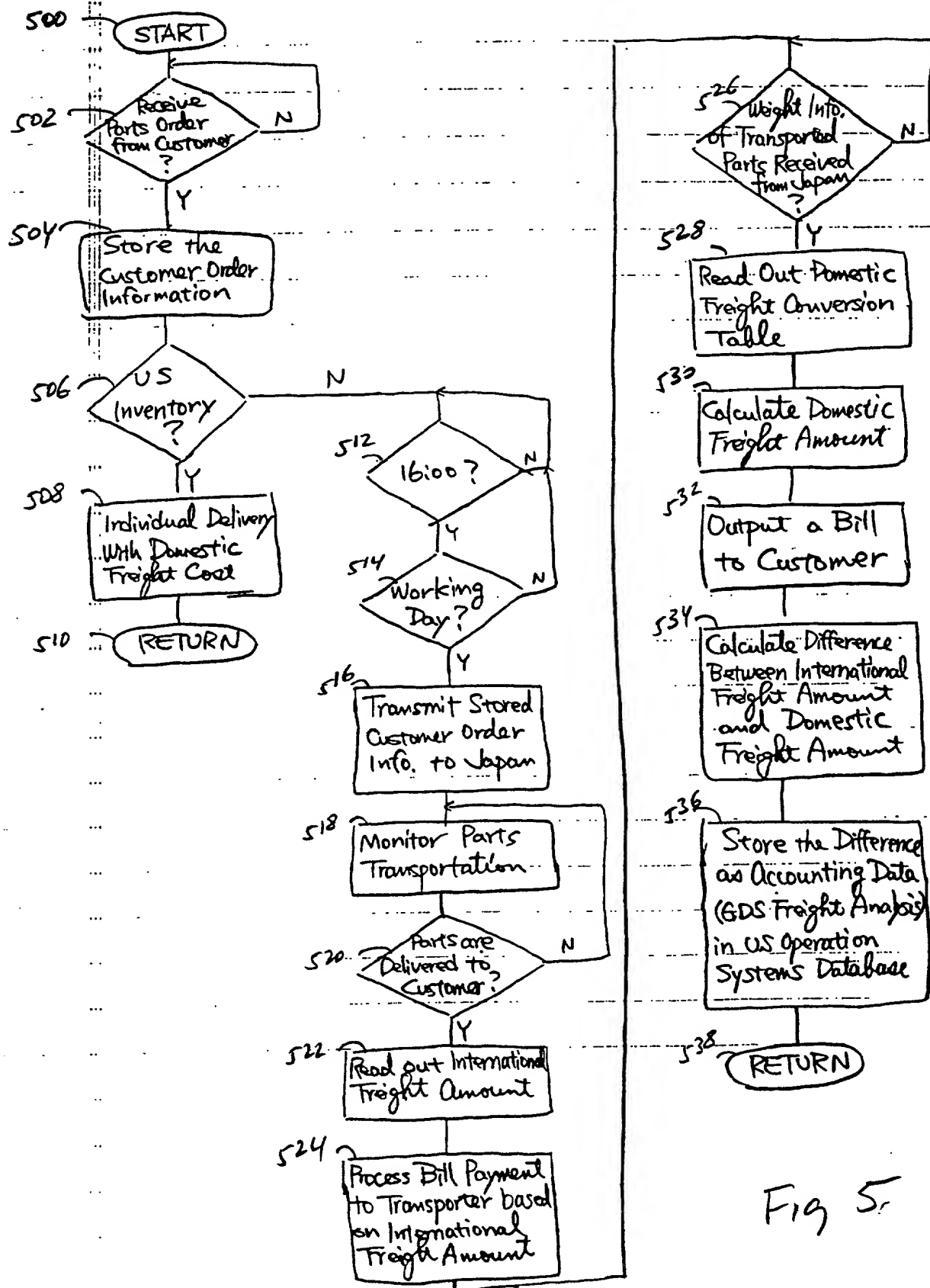


Fig 5.

GDS Freight Analysis

	Freight Charge From Carrier	Domestic Freight	Variance
Jun-99	19,336.42	18,900.00	436.42
Jul-99	28,083.73	29,002.00	(918.27)
Aug-99	17,556.35	18,250.00	(693.65)
Sep-99	15,579.25	15,490.00	89.25
Oct-99	24,527.13	25,220.00	(692.87)
Nov-99	30,854.96	30,120.00	734.96
Dec-99	14,166.75	14,380.00	(213.25)
Jan-00	26,310.12	25,920.00	390.12
Feb-00	29,848.69	29,940.00	(91.31)
Mar-00			

Fig. 6

Under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number.

Declaration and Power of Attorney For Patent Application

特許出願宣言書及び委任状

Japanese Language Declaration

日本語宣言書

下記の氏名の発明者として、私は以下の通り宣言します。

As a below named inventor, I hereby declare that:

私の住所、私書箱、国籍は下記の私の氏名の後に記載された通りです。

My residence, post office address and citizenship are as stated next to my name.

下記の名称の発明に関して請求範囲に記載され、特許出願している発明内容について、私が最初かつ唯一の発明者（下記の氏名が一つの場合）もしくは最初かつ共同発明者であると（下記の名称が複数の場合）信じています。

I believe I am the original, first and sole inventor (if only one name is listed below) or an original, first and joint inventor (if plural names are listed below) of the subject matter which is claimed and for which a patent is sought on the invention entitled

MANAGING SHIPMENT CHARGES FOR

INTERNATIONAL TRANSPORTATION OF ITEMS

上記発明の明細書（下記の欄でx印がついていない場合は、本書に添付）は、

the specification of which is attached hereto unless the following box is checked:

☐ 月 日 に提出され、米国出願番号または特許協定条約
国際出願番号を _____ とし、
(該当する場合) _____ に訂正されました。

☐ was filed on _____
as United States Application Number or
PCT International Application Number
_____ and was amended on _____
(if applicable).

私は、特許請求範囲を含む上記訂正後の明細書を検討し、内容を理解していることをここに表明します。

I hereby state that I have reviewed and understand the contents of the above identified specification, including the claims, as amended by any amendment referred to above.

私は、連邦規則法典第37編第1条56項に定義されるとおり、特許資格の有無について重要な情報を開示する義務があることを認めます。

I acknowledge the duty to disclose information which is material to patentability as defined in Title 37, Code of Federal Regulations, Section 1.56.

Under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number.

Japanese Language Declaration (日本語宣言書)

私は、米国法典第35編119条(a)-(d)項又は365条(b)項に基づき下記の、米国以外の国の少なくとも一か国を指定している特許協力条約365(a)項に基づく国際出願、又は外国での特許出願もしくは発明者証の出願についての外国優先権をここに主張するとともに、優先権を主張している、本出願の前に出願された特許または発明者証の外国出願を以下に、枠内をマークすることで、示しています。

Prior Foreign Application(s) 外国での先行出願

(Number) (番号)	(Country) (国名)
(Number) (番号)	(Country) (国名)

私は、第35編米国法典119条(e)項に基づいて下記の米国特許出願規定に記載された権利をここに主張いたします。

(Application No.) (出願番号)	(Filing Date) (出願日)
-----------------------------	------------------------

私は、下記の米国法典第35編120条に基づいて下記の米国特許出願に記載された権利、又は米国を指定している特許協力条約365条(c)に基づき権利をここに主張します。また、本出願の各請求範囲の内容が米国法典第35編112条第1項又は特許協力条約で規定された方法で先行する米国特許出願に開示されていない限り、その先行米国出願書提出日以降で本出願書の日本国内または特許協力条約国際提出日までの期間中に入手された、連邦規則法典第37編1条56項で定義された特許資格の有無に関する重要な情報について開示義務があることを認識しています。

(Application No.) (出願番号)	(Filing Date) (出願日)
(Application No.) (出願番号)	(Filing Date) (出願日)

私は、私自身の知識に基づいて本宣言書で私が行なう表明が真実であり、かつ私の入手した情報と私の信じることに基づく表明が全て真実であると信じていること、さらに故意になされた虚偽の表明及びそれと同等の行為は米国法典第18編第1001条に基づき、罰金または拘禁、もしくはその両方により処罰されること、そしてそのような故意による虚偽の表明を行なえば、出願した、又は既に許可された特許の有効性が失われることを認識し、よってここに上記のごとく宣誓を致します。

I hereby claim foreign priority under Title 35, United States Code, Section 119 (a)-(d) or 365(b) of any foreign application(s) for patent or inventor's certificate, or 365(a) of any PCT International application which designated at least one country other than the United States, listed below and have also identified below, by checking the box, any foreign application for patent or inventor's certificate, or PCT International application having a filing date before that of the application on which priority is claimed.

Priority Not Claimed
優先権主張なし

(Day/Month/Year Filed) (出願年月日)	<input type="checkbox"/>
(Day/Month/Year Filed) (出願年月日)	<input type="checkbox"/>

I hereby claim the benefit under Title 35, United States Code, Section 119(e) of any United States provisional application(s) listed below.

(Application No.) (出願番号)	(Filing Date) (出願日)
-----------------------------	------------------------

I hereby claim the benefit under Title 35, United States Code, Section 120 of any United States application(s), or 365(c) of any PCT International application designating the United States, listed below and, insofar as the subject matter of each of the claims of this application is not disclosed in the prior United States or PCT International application in the manner provided by the first paragraph of Title 35, United States Code Section 112, I acknowledge the duty to disclose information which is material to patentability as defined in Title 37, Code of Federal Regulations, Section 1.56 which became available between the filing date of the prior application and the national or PCT International filing date of application.

(Status: Patented, Pending, Abandoned) (現況: 特許許可済、係属中、放棄済)
(Status: Patented, Pending, Abandoned) (現況: 特許許可済、係属中、放棄済)

I hereby declare that all statements made herein of my own knowledge are true and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true; and further that these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under Section 1001 of Title 18 of the United States Code and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application or any patent issued thereon.

Under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number.

Japanese Language Declaration

(日本語宣言書)

委任状: 私は下記の発明者として、本出願に関する一切の
手続を米特許商标局に対して遂行する弁理士または代理人
として、下記の者を指名いたします。(弁理士、または代理
士の氏名及び登録番号を明記のこと)

POWER OF ATTORNEY: As a named inventor, I hereby appoint
the following attorney(s) and/or agent(s) to prosecute this
application and transact all business in the Patent and Trademark
Office connected therewith (list name and registration number)

Ivan S. Kavrukov (Reg. No. 25161), Thomas F. Moran (Reg. No. 16579); Christopher C. Dunham (Reg. No. 22031);
Norman H. Zivim (Reg. No. 25385), John P. White (Reg. No. 28678); Robert D. Katz (Reg. No. 30141); Peter J.
Phillips (Reg. No. 29691); Richard S. Milner (Reg. No. 33970); Richard F. Jaworski (Reg. No. 33515); and Paul
Teng (Reg. No. 40837)

書類送付先

Send Correspondence to:

Ivan S. Kavrukov, Esq.
Cooper & Dunham LLP
1185 Avenue of the Americas
New York, New York 10036

直接電話連絡先: (名前及び電話番号)

Direct Telephone Calls to: (name and telephone number)

Ivan S. Kavrukov, Esq.
Tel. (212) 278-0400

唯一または第一発明者名	Full name of sole or first inventor
	Yuichi Yamagami
発明者の署名	Inventor's signature
日付	Date
住所	Residence 19 Alpine Drive, Lincoln Park, New Jersey 07035
国籍	Citizenship Japan
私書箱	Post Office Address Same as Residence
第二共同発明者	Full name of second joint inventor, if any
	Michael J. Duciewicz
第二共同発明者	Second inventor's signature
日付	Date
住所	Residence 37 Commanche Lane, Hewitt, New Jersey 07421
国籍	Citizenship USA
私書箱	Post Office Address Same as Residence

(第三以降の共同発明者についても同様に記載し、署名をす
ること)

(Supply similar information and signature for third and subsequent
joint inventors.)

Under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number.

唯一または第一発明者名		Full name of third joint, if any Patrick Nappi	
発明者の署名	日付	Inventor's signature	Date
住所		Residence 21 Tabor Street, Little Silver, New Jersey 07739	
国籍		Citizenship USA	
私書箱		Post Office Address Same as Residence	
第二共同発明者		Full name of fourth joint, if any Joyce McNichol	
第二共同発明者	日付	Inventor's signature	Date
住所		Residence 145 Pleasant Place, Kearny, New Jersey 07032	
国籍		Citizenship USA	
私書箱		Post Office Address Same as Residence	
唯一または第一発明者名		Full name of fifth joint, if any Gabriela Barrales	
発明者の署名	日付	Inventor's signature	Date
住所		Residence 39 King Street, Dover, New Jersey 07801	
国籍		Citizenship USA	
私書箱		Post Office Address Same as Residence	
第二共同発明者		Full name of sixth joint, if any Nancy Gordon	
第二共同発明者	日付	Inventor's signature	Date
住所		Residence 41 Floyd Road, Verona, New Jersey 07044	
国籍		Citizenship USA	
私書箱		Post Office Address Same as Residence	

(第三以降の共同発明者についても同様に記載し、署名をすること)

(Supply similar information and signature for third and subsequent joint inventors.)